

Introduction to Girl Scouts of the USA

Girl Scouts of the USA is the world's pre-eminent organization dedicated solely to all girls, everywhere. In an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build character and skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adult volunteers, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives. Such qualities include: leadership, strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self-worth. Information about adult and girl programs is found on the Girls Scouts Web page, www.girlscouts.org.



Girl Scouts of the USA helps girls ages 5-17 build their skills and develop into contributing members of society. There are 315 Girl Scout councils across the country and a national headquarters in New York City. As part of the Girl Scout Law, girls pledge to do their best “to use resources wisely.”

Girl Scout Membership and Organization

Nationally there are 2,900,000 girl and 984,000 adult members in 315 local Girl Scout councils (see Appendix 1 for a Map of the Girl Scout Councils). Girl Scouting is open to all girls, 5-17. They participate in the more than 233,000 troops and groups throughout the United States and in 81 countries through “USA Girl Scouts Overseas.” Girl Scouts take great pride in serving girls of all racial/ethnic backgrounds, abilities, and income levels. In 2003, about 27.3% of all Girl Scouts were from backgrounds other than white. National recruitment materials and local goals are to increase service to underrepresented groups. Girl Scouts have a longstanding emphasis on pluralism (diversity) and offer many after-school and troop programs to underserved youth of low income and backgrounds other than white.

Founder Juliette Gordon Low organized the first group of Girl Scouts in March 12, 1912, in Savannah, Georgia. Girl Scouts of the USA was chartered by the United States Congress on March 16, 1950. More than 50 million women in the United States have enjoyed Girl Scouting during their childhood.

Girl Scout Program Age Levels

- Daisy Girl Scouts, ages 5 – 6 (kindergarten or first grade), can engage in outdoor activities but don't receive Earned Age-Level Awards.
- Brownie Girl Scouts, ages 6 - 8 (first through third grades), can earn Brownie Try-Its and explore lots of topics including the environment and the outdoors.
- Junior Girl Scouts, ages 8 - 11 (third through sixth grades), can earn Girl Scout Badges, explore more scientific topics, complete service projects, and look at careers.
- Girls Scouts 11-17 (Cadettes, ages 11-14, Seniors, ages 14-17, and STUDIO 2B_{SM} members, ages 11-13, 13-15, 15-17):
 - Girls 11-17 can use books from the STUDIO 2B Focus series, set goals, and earn the corresponding charms.
 - Girls 11-17 can also use *Interest Projects for Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts* to earn awards.
 - Girls 11-17 can mix and match, using both Interest Projects and STUDIO 2B Focus books based on their interests.

LINKING GIRLS TO THE LAND

- Girls 11-14 can earn the Girl Scout Silver Award (for completing a project taking 30 hours).
 - Girls 14-17 can earn the Girl Scout Gold Award (the highest honor in Girl Scouting for completing a project taking more than 50 hours).
- Girl Scout Adults. Girl Scout leaders are volunteers who guide a group of girls through the Girl Scout experience by helping them plan their meetings and Girl Scout activities. Other adults work as volunteers or as staff at the national and council levels.

How the Girl Scout Program “Links” Girls to the Land

Following is a list of Girl Scout publications that contain activities related to Linking Girls to the Land. Many of these publications also include resource information and suggested reading lists.

Daisy Girl Scouts

The Guide for Daisy Girl Scout Leaders, 2000 (English and Spanish versions)

My Community Album, p. 67; Mini-Garden, p. 73; Community Helpers, p. 79

Daisy Girl Scout Activity Book, 2000 (English and Spanish versions)

Daisy Girl Scouts Have Feelings, Thoughts, and Dreams, p. 6; Nature in Action, p. 24; Life Takes Shape, p. 32; Move with Me, p. 34; Sound Sense, p. 36

Brownie Girl Scouts

Try-Its for Brownie Girl Scouts, 2000

Try-Its: Animals, p. 86; Careers, p. 22; Earth and Sky, p. 94; Earth is Our Home, p. 98; Eco-Explorer, p. 102; Her Story, p. 106; Math Fun, p. 106; Movers, p. 110; Numbers and Shapes, p. 114; Outdoor Adventurer, p. 118; Plants, p. 122; Ready, Set, Go Camping, p. 124; Science in Action, p. 126; Science Wonders, p. 130; Senses, p. 134; Space Explorer, p. 138; Watching Wildlife, p. 140; Water Everywhere, p. 142; Citizen Near and Far, p. 148

Brownie Girl Scout Handbook, 2000

Chapter 4: What's Out There?, p. 47

Guide for Brownie Girl Scout Leaders, 2000 (English and Spanish versions)

Chapter 4: What's Out There?, p. 47

Junior Girl Scouts

Junior Girl Scout Badge Book, 2001

Badges and Signs: Careers, p. 12; Global Awareness, p. 14; Humans and Habitats, p. 16; Lead On, p. 18; Model Citizen, p. 20; Being My Best, p. 32; It's Important to Me, p. 36; My Community, p. 52; Adventure Sports, p. 68; Environmental Health, p. 72; Camp Together, p. 92; Earth Connections, p. 94; Eco-Action, p. 96; Finding Your Way, p. 98; Hiker, p. 102; Horse Rider, p. 106; Outdoor Cook, p. 108; Outdoor Creativity, p. 110; Outdoor Fun, p. 112; Outdoors in the City, p. 114; Plants and Animals, p. 116; Small Craft, p. 118; Swimming, p. 120; Water Fun, p. 122; Wildlife, p. 124; Your Outdoor Surroundings, p. 126; “Doing” Hobbies, p. 150; Oil Up, p. 198; Rocks Rock, p. 198; Science Discovery, p. 200; Science in Everyday Life, p. 204; Water Wonders, p. 214; Weather Watch, p. 216

Junior Girl Scout Handbook, 2001

Chapter 3: It's Great to Be a Girl, p. 40

Chapter 7: Let's Get Outdoors, p. 128

Chapter 9: Explore and Discover, p. 172

Chapter 10: Junior Girl Scout Awards, p. 189

Junior Girl Scout Leader Guide, 2001

It's Great to Be a Girl, p. 42

Let's Get Outdoors, p. 46

Explore and Discover, p. 49



LINKING GIRLS TO THE LAND

Girl Scouts 11-17 (Cadette/Senior Girl Scouts and STUDIO 2B_{SM} Members)

Cadette Girl Scout Handbook, 1995

Chapter 2: Wider Opportunities

Chapter 6: Exploring New Interests and Activities

Chapter 7: Recognitions for Cadette Girl Scouts

Interest Projects for Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts, 1997

Interest Projects: Leadership, p. 38; Travel, p. 40; All About Birds, p. 50; Build a Better Future, p. 52; Digging Through the Past, p. 56; Eco-Action, p. 58; From Shore to Sea, p. 62; Math, Maps, and More, p. 98; Planet Power, p. 72; Plant Life, p. 74; Wildlife, p. 80; Architecture and Environmental Design, p. 114; Museum Discovery, p. 130; Paper Works, p. 134; Photography, p. 138; Backpacking, p. 150; Camping, p. 152; Emergency Preparedness, p. 154; High Adventure, p. 158; Horse Sense, p. 160; Orienteering, p. 166; Outdoor Survival, p. 168; Paddle, Pole, and Role, p. 170

Resource Book for Senior Girl Scouts, 1995

Taking Action, p. 22-28

Outdoor Recreation, p. 130-131

Sample Service Projects, p. 139

Chapter 6: Recognitions and Wider Opportunities, p. 141

Studio 2B Collections 11-13, 2002

"A Case for the Environment," p. 76

"Buffy the Pollution Slayer?," p. 78

Studio 2B Collections 13-15, 2002

"Steppin' Out for Change," p. 88

Studio 2B Collections 15-17, 2002

"Mending the Cracks with Gold," p. 68



Other Girl Scout Books and Resources:

Linking Girls to the Land Video, 2002 (11-minute tape and 90 second clip, close-captioned)

Outdoor Education in Girl Scouting, 1996

Fun and Easy Activities: Nature and Science, 1996 (Bilingual, English/Spanish)

Fun and Easy Nature & Science Investigations, 2002 (English and Spanish versions)

From Sidewalk to Treetops-The Amateur's Guide to Exploring Nature in Your Neighborhood, 2003 (Video and Booklet in English and Spanish)

Leader Magazine, Summer 2003

"Aquarius Project," p. 8

Leader Magazine, Fall 2003

"America's National Parks," p. 18

"Stewards of the Earth," p. 24

Environmental and Outdoor Programs

Girl Scouts have done volunteer conservation projects and learned about natural resource careers since their very beginning in 1912. Troops hike and camp at their favorite places in National Forests, and many summer camps have special-use permits on National Forests or are forest neighbors. Many women professionals in the natural resources agencies gained their first passion and competence in the outdoors through Girl Scouts (or similar youth organizations). There have been countless local projects and relationships between agency professionals and the Girl Scouts over the decades. Girl Scouts take great pride in serving girls of all abilities and income levels. Girl Scouts have a longstanding emphasis on pluralism (diversity) and offer many after-school and troop programs to underrepresented populations.

LINKING GIRLS TO THE LAND

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA AND FEDERAL NATIONAL RESOURCE AGENCIES
Resource Guide, January 2004

Page 10

Web pages that outline ongoing Girl Scout programs in the outdoors and environment include:

- Outdoor programs and agency Web pages:
<http://jfg.girlscouts.org/Go/Outdoors/gooutd.htm>
- Girls Ask Why about Science and the Environment: <http://jfg.girlscouts.org/Why/why.htm>
- Links to science and technology resources (including ecology, water) at
<http://jfg.girlscouts.org/LINKS/scilnks.htm>
- Outdoor program skills: www.girlscouts.org/adults/outskills.html
- Outdoor education: www.girlscouts.org/adults/progoded.html
- Studio 2B_{sm} destinations: www.studio2b.org/escape/destinations/

Elliott Wildlife Values Project

The Elliott Wildlife Values Project (EWVP) of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) is a nationally administered trust fund, launched in 1977. Its activities are designed to give Girls Scouts the opportunity to:

- Learn the importance of wildlife, nature, and the environment
- Have hands-on, field experiences
- Practice science skills
- Investigate careers
- Do community service through activities that benefit plants and animals



This goal is achieved through publishing print and electronic materials; sponsoring workshops; providing small grants to councils; and collaborating with many organizations and agencies that encourage girls to develop a lifelong commitment to the conservation of wildlife.

Major Programs of the Elliott Wildlife Values Project

- **EarthPACT (Plant and Animal Conservation Team)** – A grant program that supports activities of benefit to wildlife and plants through partnerships between Girl Scout councils and local government (below the state level) agencies, nature-related institutions, or businesses.
- **Linking Girls to the Land** – A partnership initiative between GSUSA and federal natural resource agencies. The initiative offers funding, support, and programs for girls to become involved in conservation and natural resource issues on a national and local level through: environmental education, volunteer service, outdoor skills development, and career awareness.
- **Herford N. Elliott Memorial Bird Sanctuaries** – Natural areas developed in collaboration with a Girl Scout council and an environmental organization. Funds are given to support bird habitat, conservation and preservation, local activism, career development, and research.
- **Lou Henry Hoover Wildlife Sanctuaries** – Natural areas, surveyed, designed, and managed by a Girl Scout council, for plant and wildlife stewardship and conservation education.

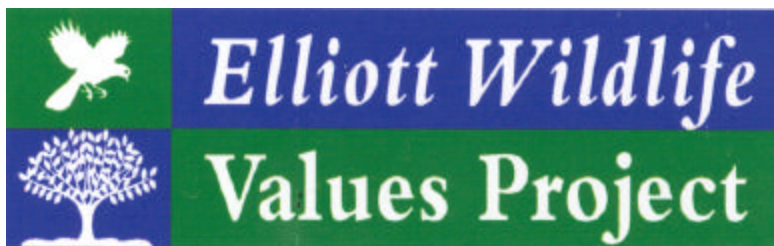
LINKING GIRLS TO THE LAND

- **From Sidewalks to Treetops** – Video and guide, available in English and Spanish versions, helps you guide a group in exploring wildlife and plant life in your neighborhood – even if you live in a city and know nothing about nature! This resource is great for youth group leaders or advisors. Neighborhood environmental exploration workshops are also offered. Materials can be ordered through GSUSA's NES by calling 1-800-221-6707.
- **Collaborations with Environmental Organizations**
 - Natural Science in the Tetons Studio 2B_{sm} destination (Teton Science School)
 - Audubon Camp (National Audubon Society)
 - Girls for Planet Earth (Wildlife Conservation Society – Bronx Zoo)
 - Forces of Nature (National Geographic Society)
- **Printed and VHS Resources**
 - *Linking Girls to the Land Video*, 2002 (11-minute tape and 90 second clip, close-captioned)
 - *Fun and Easy Activities: Nature and Science*, 1996 (Bilingual, English/Spanish)
 - *Fun and Easy Nature & Science Investigations*, 2002 (English and Spanish versions)
 - *From Sidewalks to Treetops-The Amateur's Guide to Exploring Nature in Your Neighborhood*, 2003 (video and booklet in English and Spanish)
 - *Studio 2B Collections 11-13*, 2002
 - “A Case for the Environment,” p. 76
 - “Buffy the Pollution Slayer?,” p. 78
 - *Studio 2B Collections 13-15*, 2002
 - “Steppin’ Out for Change,” p. 88
 - *Studio 2B Collections 15-17*, 2002
 - “Mending the Cracks with Gold,” p. 68
 - *Leader Magazine*, Summer 2003
 - “Aquarius Project,” p. 8
 - *Leader Magazine*, Fall 2003
 - “America’s National Parks,” p. 18
 - “Stewards of the Earth,” p. 24

For more information about the Elliott Wildlife Values Project contact:

María Cabán
 Manager, Elliott Wildlife Values Project
 Membership & Program Initiatives
 Girl Scouts of the USA
 420 Fifth Avenue, 15th Floor
 New York, NY 10018
 Tel: 212-852-5727 Fax: 212-852-6515
mcaban@girlscouts.org

Jodi Stewart
 Elliott Wildlife Values Project Consultant
 Membership & Program Initiatives
 Girl Scouts of the USA
 420 Fifth Avenue, 15th Floor
 New York, NY 10018
 Tel: 212-852-8076 Fax: 212-852-6515
jstewart@girlscouts.org



LINKING GIRLS TO THE LAND